MARVEL 83 .com

EXILES

BLINK'S CHOICE

CASEY JONES & VINCE RUSSELL

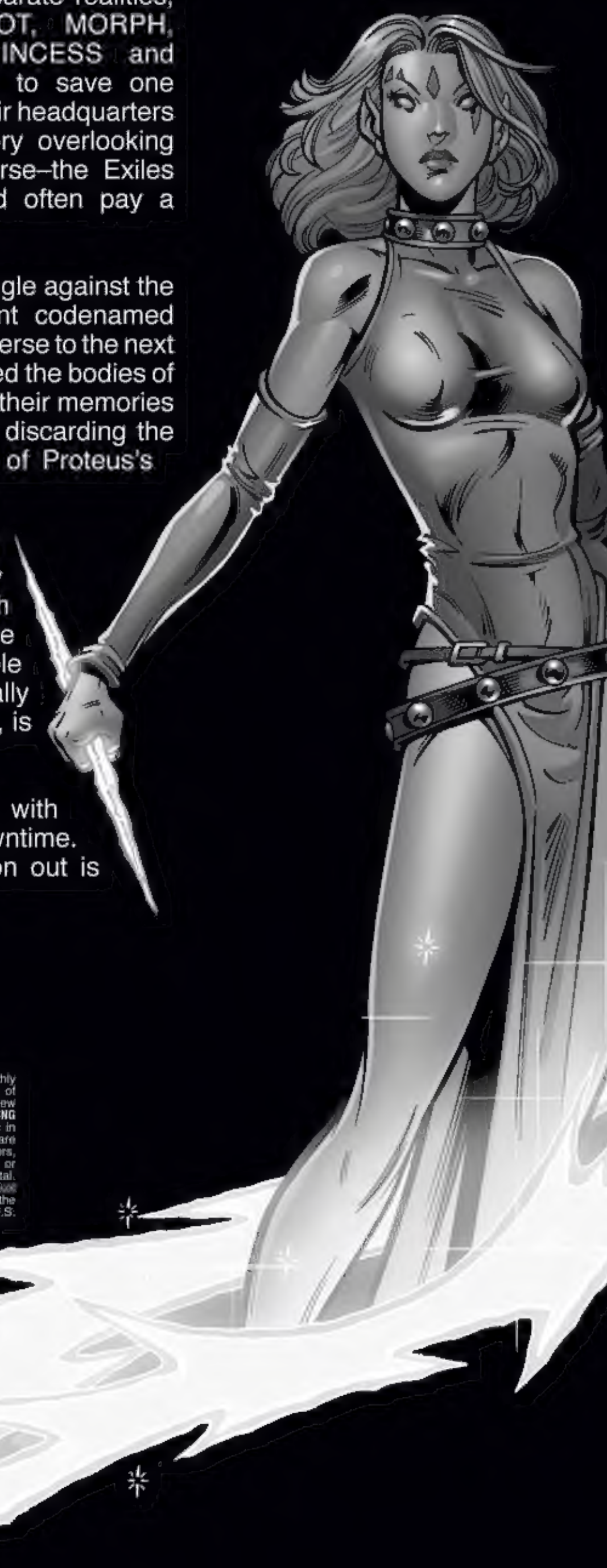
Previously in EXILES:

Gathered together from their own separate realities, BLINK, SABRETOOTH, LONGSHOT, MORPH, SPIDER-MAN 2099, POWER PRINCESS and HEATHER HUDSON risk their lives to save one imperiled Earth after another. From their headquarters in the "Crystal Palace"–an observatory overlooking the countless realities of the Multiverse–the Exiles undertake world-saving missions and often pay a terrible price.

Such was the case with their epic struggle against the body-snatching, reality-warping mutant codenamed PROTEUS. Able to travel from one universe to the next under his own power, Proteus possessed the bodies of a series of powerful victims, absorbing their memories and draining their life-energies before discarding the used-up "shells." Unfortunately, one of Proteus's victims was Blink's boyfriend, MIMIC.

Before Blink even had time to mourn Mimic's death, Proteus took the body of another Exile, Morph. However, with the help of a behavior-modifying device from another world, the Exiles were able to "convince" Proteus that he is actually Morph. So, Proteus, for the time being, is contained.

Now the Exiles find themselves with something they've very rarely had: downtime. What they choose to do from here on out is anyone's guess...



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I CAME AS SOON AS I COULD, ROGUE. NOW WHAT IS SO **WRONG** THAT YOU COULDN'T TELL ME OVER THE PHONE?

OH, **ERIC**...I YOU HAVE TO SEE IT FOR **YOUR-SELF**...

I WAS SITTIN' IN THE LIVIN' ROOM, WHEN THERE WAS A FLASH OF LIGHT AND SUDDENLY...THERE HE **WAS.**

WHO WAS IT? A **TELEPORTER?** LIKE NIGHTCRAWLER OR VANISHER? DID HE **THREATEN** YOU?

NO, ERIC. IT WAS A **BODY.**

BURNT BEYOND RECOGNITION... RADIOACTIVE...BUT, STILL...I **KNEW.**

THE NOTE JUST **CONFIRMED** IT.

"THIS IS **MAGNUS,** SON OF MAGNETO AND ROGUE. HE GAVE HIS LIFE TO SAVE US, AND DIED A **HERO.**"

NO...**NO**... OUR SON RAN AWAY FROM HOME, THAT'S **ALL**...

ERIC, IT'S **HIM!**

BUT...WHERE ON EARTH HAS HE **BEEN** ALL THIS TIME?

EARTH #653
MESMERO

SECURITY BREACH IN THE DIRECTOR'S OFFICE!

FFFFASHHH

LOGAN-SAN!

<IT CANNOT BE, MARIKO! HE HAS BEEN MISSING FOR MONTHS!>

EARTH #172
WOLVERINE

SSSSHHHHHH

SOMEBODY TRACE THE *SOURCE* OF THAT TELEPORT!

NOBODY KILLS MY BEST AGENT AND GETS AWAY WITH IT!

EARTH #1287
MAVERICK

EARTH #181
DAREDEVIL

A RATHER *DRAMATIC* ENTRANCE, MATTHEW. WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN ALL THIS TIME?

LONG STORY, MISTER FISK, AND YOU WON'T BELIEVE THE *HALF* OF IT.

HOPE YOU DIDN'T GIVE MY *JOB* AWAY WHILE I WAS GONE.

THE CRYSTAL PALACE
EXILES HEADQUARTERS

"DAREDEVIL." "HULK." "POWER PRINCESS." THOSE ARE NAMES THAT I GET.

THEN THERE'S GUYS LIKE KANE HERE.

I MEAN, WHAT KIND OF CODENAME IS "KANE"? DID HE THINK IT SOUNDED TOUGH OR SOMETHING?

TELL ME, HEATHER, DID MORPH ALWAYS PRATTLE LIKE THIS?

IS INANE CHATTER THE NORM FOR HIM?

YES... YES, IT IS.

SIX DOWN, TEN TO GO.

FAASHH

MORPH, BE A PET AND GO TO THE INFIRMARY? FIND OUT WHAT'S TAKING SO LONG WITH IRON MAN.

CAN'T YOU JUST USE THE INTERCOM?

WE'LL GET QUICKER RESULTS IF YOU ASK IN PERSON.

AND YOU! MAKE YOURSELF USEFUL FOR A CHANGE AND MIND THAT MORPH DOESN'T GET SIDETRACKED.

YOU WOUND ME, DOCTOR HUDSON.

I'M DEDUCING THE PHYSICS BEHIND YOUR EXCURSION PLATFORM, AND YOU ASSUME I'M DOING NOTHING.

SORRY, DOCTOR O'HARA, BUT I'D LIKE A MINUTE ALONE WITH POWER PRINCESS, IF YOU DON'T MIND.

GIRL-TALK, RIGHT.

BRACE YOURSELVES, SPORTS-FANS-- SPIDEY ATTEMPTS THE FABLED "TRIPLE LINDY"...

...AND HE ***STICKS*** THE LANDING!

LITERALLY.

9.8

ZARDA, THAT'S THE ***THIRD*** TIME YOU'VE REFERRED TO MORPH IN THE ***PAST TENSE*** RIGHT IN FRONT OF HIM!

BUT...THAT IS ***NOT*** MORPH. NOT ANYMORE.

PRECISELY. IT'S ***PROTEUS,*** INHABITING MORPH'S BODY. BUT THANKS TO YOUR ***B-MOD*** EQUIPMENT, HE ***BELIEVES*** HE'S MORPH--

I ***KNOW*** ALL THIS, HEATHER.

THEN WHY GIVE MORPH ***ANY*** REASON TO QUESTION WHO HE IS? IS YOUR BRAIN-WASHING GIZMO SO ***FOOLPROOF?***

THE MOST DANGEROUS MUTANT ***EVER*** IS DORMANT INSIDE HIM, AND I'D RATHER LET SLEEPING DOGS LIE. GOT IT?

I DO NOT CARE FOR YOUR ***TONE,*** LITTLE WOMAN, BUT ***YES.*** I "GOT" IT.

THE STASIS GALLERY

I'M GLAD WE'RE FINALLY SENDING THESE POOR SHLUBS HOME FOR A PROPER *FUNERAL.*

IT *CREEPS* ME OUT SEEING 'EM LINED UP HERE, LIKE A TROPHY CASE...OR THE *FROZEN-FOOD* SECTION!

TRAPPED LIKE FLIES IN AMBER.

HEY, HOW DO YOU STICK TO *WALLS,* ANYWAY?

MY *TALONS* GRIP MOST SURFACES.

THEY TOOK A LITTLE GETTING USED TO WHEN THEY FIRST GREW IN.

WACKY.

SO, HOW DO YOU, AH...

PICK MY NOSE?

WIPE MY BUTT?

I WAS GONNA SAY "SHAKE HANDS," BUT NOW THAT YOU *MENTION* IT...

WHAT'S THE DEAL WITH *THIS* GUY?

OH. THAT'S *T-BIRD.* HE'S AN *ORIGINAL* EXILE. WE'LL DEFROST HIM AND PATCH HIM UP OURSELVES, ONCE WE CLEAR OUT THE *RIFFRAFF.*

THE INFIRMARY
IRON MAN

BUT YOU CAN'T SEND ME BACK! THEY'LL KILL ME ON SIGHT!

FINE WITH ME, LONG AS I DON'T GOTTA HEAR YA WHINE.

LAST TIME WE MET, STARK, YOU TRIED TO KILL ME AN' MY FRIENDS. S'WHY I TOOK YOUR ARMOR OFF YA BEFORE WAKIN' YOU UP.

THOSE WERE DIFFERENT CIRCUMSTANCES, AND I'M SORRY IT HAPPENED, BUT SENDING ME HOME LIKE THIS IS A DEATH SENTENCE!

IF THERE'S A PRICE ON YOUR HEAD, I'M SURE YOU EARNED IT.

YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND! I COME FROM A CULTURE OF WAR AND CONQUEST. I'M AN OUTLAW THERE BECAUSE I DON'T BELIEVE IN VIOLENCE AS A WAY OF LIFE.

I CREATED THE IRON MAN ARMOR TO FIGHT THE MILITARY-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX THAT'S MADE MY WORLD A PERMANENT WAR ZONE.

THEY ISSUED A SHOOT-ON-SIGHT ORDER ON ME.

BLAH, BLAH, BLAH...

CAN I PLEASE SPEAK TO SOMEONE WITH A BRAIN? WHERE'S BLINK?

HAVIN' A PRIVATE MOMENT. YER STUCK WITH ME.

THE DESERT CHAMBER

HOW CAN THIS *BE?*

HOW CAN THE CRYSTAL CASTLE CONTAIN AN ENTIRE *DESERT* WITHIN ITSELF?

I'LL TRY TO EXPLAIN LATER, *LONGSHOT*. FOR NOW, DO ME A FAVOR AND KEEP QUIET.

THIS IS *HARD ENOUGH* AS IT IS.

OH, CAL. I WISH I'D BEEN BETTER TO YOU JUST *BEFORE* THE END.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING, BLINK?

HUH?

TRYING TO *PRAY*, I GUESS. ONLY...I CAN'T THINK OF WHAT TO *SAY*.

PRAY...?

YOU KNOW, TALK TO *GOD*. ASK HIM TO HAVE *MERCY* ON CALVIN.

ISN'T IT A BIT *LATE* FOR THAT?

WELL, I DIDN'T EXACTLY GO TO *CHURCH* AS A KID, SO I CAN'T EXPLAIN IT ANY BETTER. IT JUST SEEMED APPROPRIATE AT A *FUNERAL*.

FUNERAL. YES. WE DON'T BURY OUR DEAD ON MOJOWORLD WE RECYCLE THE BIOMASS.

BUT WHY BURY MIMIC *HERE*, WHEN OTHERS ARE BEING RETURNED TO THEIR *HOMEWORLDS*?

I GUESS I WANTED TO KEEP CAL *CLOSE* BY...

BLINNK

...SO I COULD VISIT HIS *GRAVE*.

LET'S GO.

I THINK I FIGURED OUT WHY HEATHER ASKED US TO FETCH IRON MAN TOGETHER.

Y-YOU DID?

WELL, I'M NOT BLIND.

THIS IS A CRIME AGAINST NATURE WE'RE TALKING ABOUT!

...WE ARE...?

YES, MIGUEL. BUT DON'T BE AFRAID.

I WON'T LET YOU BE THE ONLY UN-FUNNY SPIDER-MAN IN THE MULTIVERSE.

BY THE TIME I'M THROUGH WITH YOU, YOU'LL BE QUIPPING LIKE A PRO.

HEATHER SENT US TO ESCORT STARK TO THE EXCURSION PLATFORM.

SOMETHIN' WRONG WITH THE INTERCOM?

SHE ALSO WANTED SOME ALONE-TIME WITH POWER PRINCESS.

DON'T WE ALL?

STEP LIVELY, CAPTAIN UNDERPANTS. YOU GOT A FLIGHT TO CATCH

YOU HAD YOUR CHANCE, CRETIN...

"ABRAXAS."

AW, NO...

VMMMMMM VMMMMMM VMMMMM

YOU SHOULD'VE LISTENED TO *REASON*, YOU DUMB ANIMAL.

YOU COULD HAVE HAD ME AS AN *ALLY!*

KLIK KLATCH SNAK CHK CH-CHK POP

THOOOM

?

YOU DON'T SUPPOSE PROTEUS--?

IT'S ALWAYS *SOMETHING*, ZARDA. IT'S ALWAYS *SOMETHING*.

CHOOOM CHOOOM BOOOM

WE ARE UNDER ATTACK!

SOUNDS LIKE THE INFIRMARY

HANG ON TO YOUR *LUNCH!*

WOOOF

WHAT RIGHT HAVE YOU TO SEND ME HOME TO DIE?

YOU'RE AS BAD AS THE TIMEBROKER EVER WAS!

STRIKE THAT--YOU'RE WORSE!

ZARK

SHRAK!

AT LEAST HE HAD A GAME PLAN!

ZARK

SHRAK!

HEY, THIS PLACE IS FRAGILE!

ZARK

THIS SHOULD HOLD HIM.

THWIP

FWOOSH

DON'T BE STUPID.

AND DON'T THINK YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE--

THOOONK

SFLANG

--WHO CAN SHOOT WEBS!

NOW DO YOU WISH YOU'D LISTENED TO ME?

CHOOOM

BLINNNK

SABRE-TOOTH!

YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO TAKE HIS ARMOR!

ZING

FORGET IT, BLINK--I'M **SHIELDED** AGAINST ENERGY ATTACKS.

HOW'S YOUR SHIELDS AGAINST A GOOD RIGHT CROSS?

KLANG

SPLANG

YOU GET ONE LUCKY SHOT AGAINST ME.

ACTUALLY--

--WE GET ONE MORE.

SHNNNG

AIIEEEE!

HE HAS A REBOOT SWITCH!

GAHHHHH!

HELP ME TAKE THIS SPAM CAN OFF HIM BEFORE HIS SYSTEMS REINITIALIZE!

KLIK

HOW DID YOU KNOW ABOUT THAT SWITCH?

LAST TIME WE FOUGHT, HE GOT DEACTIVATED. HE SPENT THE NEXT THREE HOURS TRAPPED IN HIS SUIT, BEGGING ME TO REBOOT HIM.

AHH! GET IT OUT! SAVE MY EYE!

I WOULD, MISTER STARK... IF YOU'D LEFT ANY-THING IN THE INFIRMARY INTACT.

SO... MORPH DEFEATED HIM?

NO.

IS THERE A KISS IN IT FOR ME IF I SAY, "YES"?

IN THAT CASE, IT WAS LONGSHOT.

FIVE MINUTES LATER...

WHAT'S IT *LIKE* WHERE HE COMES FROM, HEATHER?

FAASSHH

PRETTY *QUIET* SINCE HE LEFT, SABRE-TOOTH.

DATABASE SAYS HE STARTED A ***WORLD WAR*** THERE. WHY DO YOU ASK?

HE SAID HE GOT THE DEATH SENTENCE BACK HOME FOR TRYING TO ***STOP*** A WAR.

I THINK HE JUST WANTED TO HANG AROUND AND ***STUDY*** THIS PLACE.

WE SHOULD ***HASTEN*** TO RETURN THE OTHER TEN IN STASIS.

NINE. BLINK'S KEEPING MIMIC ***HERE.***

BUT... WITHOUT BURIAL IN HIS HOME SOIL, HIS ***SPIRIT*** WILL WANDER ***FOREVER.***

YEAH, WELL, MAYBE WHERE ***YOU*** COME FROM, ZARDA, BUT ***CAL*** DIDN'T BELIEVE THE SAME THINGS AS YOU.

AND WHAT ***DID*** HE BELIEVE ABOUT THE AFTERLIFE? WAS IT HIS ***WISH*** TO BE BURIED HERE?

I, AH... I DON'T KNOW.

WE NEVER TALKED ABOUT IT. THERE WAS ALWAYS SOME UNIVERSE TO SAVE...

BLINK, I DO NOT QUESTION YOUR ***DEVOTION*** TO HIM. BUT IF HE NEVER TOLD YOU HIS FUNERAL WISHES, PERHAPS YOU SHOULD ASK HIS ***FAMILY?***

EARTH #27
MAGNUS
...IN SURE AND CERTAIN HOPE--

EARTH #653
MESMERO
"--OF THE RESURRECTION--

EARTH #172
WOLVERINE
"--TO ETERNAL LIFE--

EARTH #1287
MAVERICK
"--WE COMMEND TO ALMIGHTY GOD--"

EARTH #181
DAREDEVIL
IT'S GOOD TO BE HOME.

EARTH #3031
KANE
"--OUR DEARLY DEPARTED BROTHER--"

EARTH #2020
IRON MAN
I SURRENDER!

EARTH #714
ANGEL
TIME TO GET BACK TO WORK...

EARTH #23895
STORM
"AND WE COMMIT THIS BODY TO THE GROUND."

EARTH #10101
THE VISION
"EARTH TO EARTH--

EARTH #1917
COLOSSUS
"--ASHES TO ASHES--

EARTH #4210
MAGIK
"--DUST TO DUST.

EARTH #873
HULK
"THE LORD BLESS US--

EARTH #15
SPIDER
"--AND KEEP US.
PETER PARKER
INMATE #24739
1963
-
2005

EARTH #4732
MS. MARVEL
"THE LORD MAKE HIS FACE TO SHINE UPON US--

EARTH #371
GAMBIT
"--AND BE GRACIOUS UNTO US--"

EARTH #2189
NAMORA
--AND GRANT US PEACE.

AMEN.

XAVIER SCHOOL FOR GIFTED YOUNGSTERS

FAASSHH

VREEEET VREEEET VREEEET

JEAN! GET UP!

HUNH?

VREEEET VREEEET VREEEET

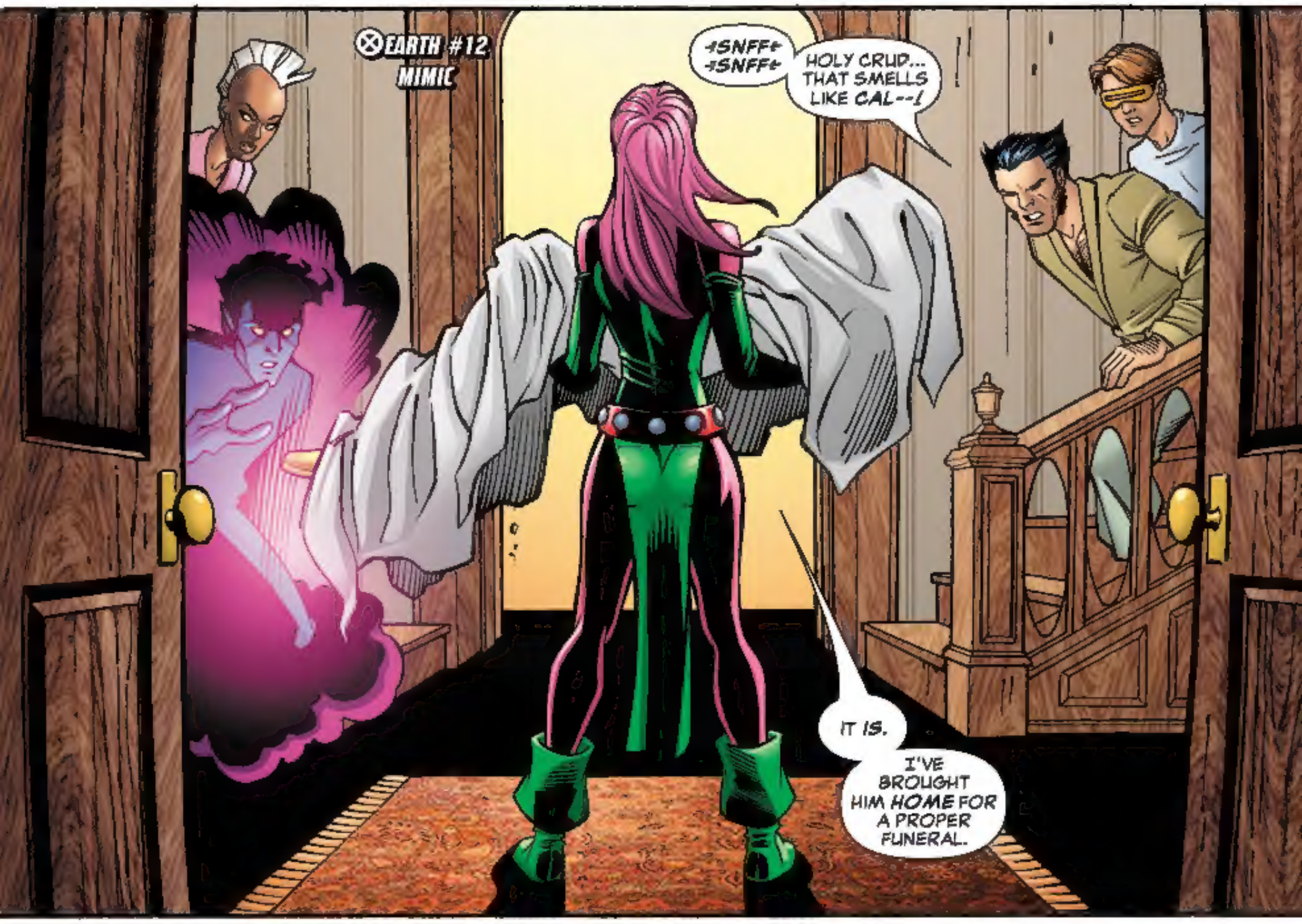
BAM

UNGLAUBLICH! WHO IS ATTACKING US THIS TIME?

SOMEONE WHO WILL SOON BE SORRY!

I WUZ HAVIN' A HOT DREAM. SOMEBODY'S GONNA PAY...

SNIKT



CAL DIED FIGHTING FOR WHAT HE BELIEVED IN. I'LL TELL YOU HOW IT HAPPENED, AND WHY HE'S BEEN GONE...
...AND THEN I HOPE YOU'LL TELL ME EVERYTHING HE NEVER GOT A CHANCE TO TELL ME HIMSELF.

IT'S YOUR FUNERAL

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